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Envision Utah

Evan Curtis
State Planning Coordinator

Andrew Gruber
Executive Director

March 31, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of Utah's transportation partners listed below, we express our congratulations to you on your recent confirmation as the 19th U.S. Secretary of Transportation. We look forward to working with you and your agency and appreciate the opportunity to share with you Utah's key transportation reauthorization principles.

Utah's public and private-sector transportation partners encourage President Biden and the U.S. Department of Transportation, under your leadership, to work with the Congress on the following principles for a multi-year surface transportation reauthorization:

1. Long-term and timely reauthorization of the current federal surface transportation authorization legislation;
2. Sustainable funding mechanisms to provide the core funding for the federal transportation program;
3. Utilize existing formula-based programs with enhanced flexibility and multimodal funding for federal transportation programs;
4. Streamline the federal review and approval processes to reduce time and eliminate unnecessary duplication and costs for infrastructure projects; and
5. Support and ensure state, regional, and local transportation agencies have the ability to harness innovation, data, and technology to achieve a safer and more resilient, efficient, and effective surface transportation system.

Attached and linked here is the [full text](#) of Utah's shared transportation reauthorization principles.

We believe that with the leadership of President Biden and the U.S. Department of Transportation, in collaboration with the Congress, the Federal Government can invest in America's infrastructure and advance solutions to our nation's most pressing infrastructure challenges.

Again, congratulations to you, and to President Biden and Vice President Harris. We look forward to working with the new administration and the Department to accomplish these important goals.

Sincerely,



Andrew S. Gruber
Executive Director
Wasatch Front Regional Council

On behalf of:

[American Council of Engineering Companies of Utah](#)
[Associated General Contractors of Utah](#)
[Cache Metropolitan Planning Organization](#)
[Cache Valley Transit District](#)
[Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization](#)
[Mountainland Association of Governments](#)
[Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce](#)
[St. George SunTran](#)
[Utah Association of Counties](#)
[Utah Department of Transportation](#)
[Utah League of Cities and Towns](#)
[Utah Transit Authority](#)
[Utah Transportation Coalition](#)
[Utah Trucking Association](#)
[Wasatch Front Regional Council](#)

UTAH'S 2021 FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION PRINCIPLES

Background

The current federal surface transportation authorization legislation – Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) – expires on Sept. 30, 2021. Utah's transportation agencies and partners have jointly developed the following key principles for a multi-year reauthorization that reflect priorities to keep Utah moving.

1. Long-term and timely reauthorization

Stability and predictability are essential for infrastructure planning, engineering, and construction. A reauthorization bill should be adopted on time, so as to avoid uncertainty and disruptions in critical infrastructure investments. The bill should be long-term (5-6 years), to provide predictability and stability.

2. Sustainable funding mechanisms

User fees, including the federal motor fuel tax, should continue to provide the core funding for the federal transportation program. Sustainable funding strategies that meet long-term funding needs, including road usage charges, should continue to be explored. In the meantime, additional funding mechanisms should be utilized to ensure sustainability of the federal transportation program.

3. Utilize existing formula-based programs with enhanced flexibility and multimodal funding

The existing federal formula programs are a proven mechanism to efficiently provide funding and should be maintained. Federal transportation programs should continue to support integrated transportation systems that provide choices to users, including driving, transit, and active transportation.

Within those programs, there should be programmatic and funding flexibility for high-performing states such as Utah to use funds for the investments that achieve the best long-term outcomes. This flexibility will allow for funding to be targeted towards innovation, safety, access, connectivity, and other key priorities.

Maintain programs that provide value to Utah, including: 1) competitive discretionary funding programs for transit capital projects and formula funding for transit maintenance and operations; and 2) planning and Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and local governments.

4. Streamline processes

Federal review and approval processes should be streamlined to reduce time and eliminate unnecessary duplication and cost. For example, the "one federal decision" policy should be codified.

5. Support and ensure state, regional, and local transportation agencies have the ability to harness innovation, data, and technology

Innovative approaches, technologies, and data sharing should be embraced to achieve a safer and more resilient, efficient, and effective surface transportation system.

Utah's Transportation Partners



American Council of Engineering Companies
of Utah



Associated General Contractors



Cache MPO



Cache Valley Transit District



Dixie MPO



MAG MPO



Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce



St. George SunTran



Utah Association of Counties



Utah Department of Transportation



Utah League of Cities and Towns



Utah Transit Authority



Utah Transportation Coalition



Utah Trucking Association



WFRC MPO